CIPD

*Championing better
work and working lives*

PERFORMANCE
FEEDBACK

An evidence
review

**Practice summary
and recommendations**

September 2022

The CIPD is the professional body for HR and people development. The registered charity champions better work and working lives and has been setting the benchmark for excellence in people and organisation development for more than 100 years. It has almost 160,000 members across the world, provides thought leadership through independent research on the world of work, and offers professional training and accreditation for those working in HR and learning and development.

Practice summary and recommendations

Performance feedback: an evidence review

Contents

(1) **Introduction**

A common ambition in organisations is to create a 'feedback culture': to embed a habit of feedback and encourage managers and employees to give each other formal and informal feedback as often as possible. The belief that feedback improves performance is widely held and there seems to be virtually no counterargument against a feedback culture: it is assumed that the more feedback, the better. As the adage goes, 'feedback is a gift'.

There is a solid body of research to show that feedback can be among the most powerful influences on performance.[1] However, it is also apparent that feedback is not always a gift: in fact, often it can harm performance. This is perhaps not so surprising: most of us will have seen or experienced times when feedback has demotivated or proved damaging in some way.

HR professionals and leaders in organisations need to understand which factors play a role in making feedback effective or destructive, and ensure they are implemented as part of the interventions aimed at promoting feedback.

This evidence review answers two questions related to feedback:

- What factors make feedback effective in improving performance?

- How can HR professionals ensure that effective feedback is given, both through policies and by building people's capabilities?

What is feedback?
Feedback refers to any information about a person's performance which is used as a basis for improvement. In organisations, it can be called 'performance feedback', and is often defined as *'actions taken by (an) external agent(s) to provide information regarding some aspect(s) of one's task performance'*.[2]

Feedback takes many forms. It can be objective (when it is the result of clearly visible output, such as the number of pages translated in one hour) or subjective (when it is based on an evaluation made by a person, such as a manager rating yearly performance or a colleague saying, 'what a captivating presentation!'). It can be intrinsic to the task, for example, a patient surviving a surgery, or require some external intervention such as collecting and communicating patient satisfaction data to a doctor.

In organisations, feedback is often formal and part of performance management practices, such as a manager giving feedback in an annual meeting with a report. It can also be part of development, for example through 360-degree feedback processes in which one's colleagues and reports as well as one's manager may complete a feedback survey.

In this review, we focus on any feedback, either subjective or objective, that managers or supervisors give on people's performance. We did not include research on feedback from co-workers or clients, automated feedback – for example via an IT system – or feedback that does not relate to performance.

To learn more about how to understand and measure performance, see our evidence review on people performance at cipd.co.uk/evidence-people-performance

An evidence-based approach
In today's age of information overload, it's easy to be swayed by the latest fads or received wisdom. Effective decision-making can be difficult – it requires us to critically question our assumptions, not be biased by anecdote, and avoid cherry-picking the evidence that

confirms our world view. Evidence-based practice gives well-established approaches to help with this. Hard proof is elusive, but we can identify the best available evidence, including the most promising options to achieve our desired outcomes. Employers and people professionals need to take note of this if they are to identify best bets for action.

This evidence review summarises the best available scientific research on performance feedback. It is based on a rapid evidence assessment (REA) – a shortened form of the systematic review. To read about our methodology and technical aspects of the studies on which this report is based, see the accompanying scientific summary, available at cipd. co.uk/evidence-feedback

② How does feedback affect performance?

Feedback has varying, but potentially large, effects on performance and learning. A seminal piece of research is a systematic review by Kluger and DeNisi published in 1996.[3] This looked at 607 instances where feedback had been delivered: overall the impact was clearly positive, but over a third of the included studies found that performance worsened after feedback and a number found no effect.

How does feedback work?
There are various explanations of why feedback is important for performance. The social comparison theory[4] helps us understand how the link might work: it states that people tend to compare themselves with others, which allows them to judge their performance in relation to that of their peers. When the resulting evaluation is negative, the theory states that people have a strong desire to improve.

Another useful theory to explain how feedback and performance are linked is the feedback intervention theory.[5] It states that people compare the feedback received with what they wish to achieve, and depending on the result, they maintain or adjust their effort. Therefore, if negative feedback is received, people will be motivated to increase the effort and achieve better performance.

However, given the variability in the effects of feedback on performance, there are likely many moderating factors that determine the course of thought and action that someone takes after receiving feedback.

Reactions to feedback
Simply receiving feedback is no guarantee that someone's performance will improve. One important factor that likely determines what happens next is how the person reacts to the feedback, that is, what they think and feel about it. It's not what you say that counts, so much as how it 'lands'. For example, confronted with negative feedback, a person can think they have what it takes to put in more effort and push through to achieve better performance – this shows high self-efficacy or confidence, a characteristic that is also closely related to resilience. But another person could feel disappointed by the same negative feedback.

The way someone reacts to feedback is a major factor in how it affects performance: employees who express positive emotions immediately after receiving feedback are more likely to improve their performance, whereas the performance of those who express negative emotions can worsen.[6] Faced with negative feedback, the person who feels

adequately equipped to perform better is likely to take in the feedback, adapt their own actions accordingly, and try again. On the other hand, the person who is left disappointed is likely to reject the feedback by attributing it to external factors or to the feedback giver's misjudgement, shifting their attention away from the task.

> **Recommendations for practice**
>
> - Remember that feedback is not always useful. Instead of encouraging managers or colleagues to give as much feedback as possible, emphasise quality feedback. Prompt managers to invest time in better preparing and delivering feedback.
>
> - Train managers to recognise and work with reactions to feedback. Instead of expecting employees to always take on the feedback, they can ask how the person feels about the feedback, and whether it is actionable or fair.
>
> - Consider assessing employees' reactions to feedback more systematically. For example, ask a few short questions to quickly survey employees after a feedback meeting to evaluate how useful the feedback was for them and how positive/negative they feel following the feedback. This can inform further line management conversations or target training to develop managers' capability in feedback.

③ Feedback content

In this section we look at how the information contained in feedback affects how useful it is for supporting performance.

Specific, task-related information

It's commonly thought that feedback should be specific. This is confirmed by scientific research: specific feedback will more likely lead to improved performance.[7] In feedback on task performance, it helps to elaborate on the various elements of the task – for example the requirements, constraints and available resources – and on the detail of results, what mistakes were observed and options for how to proceed. A general statement about overall performance is far less likely to help.

To illustrate, an employee who hears, *'overall you did well in handling the customers' requests, although you can still improve how you communicate'*, is less likely to improve their performance than a peer who receives the following feedback:

> *'I observed three of your customer calls today. You managed the first one very well, the customer gave a satisfaction rating of 5/5, while the other two were more average, with a 3/5 rating. In the second call, when the customer had difficulties hearing you, you kept repeating the same message, just louder. In such situations, when the customer struggles to hear you because of something that happens on their side, you can try using fewer words – just the essentials. You can also propose that you send an email with the information or call them later.'*

Research gives some pointers on why specific feedback is so important. In general, we find that feedback isn't understood as clearly as managers believe it is, especially when it's negative.[8] This gap may occur either because managers are less motivated to be accurate when the feedback is negative, or because negative feedback is more difficult for employees to process.

In addition, using *causal* language makes negative feedback more effective in improving performance.[9] That is to say, those giving feedback explicitly comment on and open up discussion about why performance has been low. For example, in the above illustration there is some explanation of what makes it easy or difficult for customers to understand. With causal language, the person who receives negative feedback can more easily make sense of the information and understand what needs to be changed to improve performance.

It's not easy to give specific feedback – it requires more reflection and preparation in advance – but it is necessary. This is the case even if managers feel that a less detailed overview is enough and is especially so for negative feedback. However, as we discuss next, it's advisable to limit negative feedback.

Positive where possible, even for poor performers
A difficult question is how to deliver negative feedback, to communicate that an employee's performance is below standards. When giving negative feedback, managers typically aim to have a positive, corrective effect. They hope to avoid pushback, negative emotions, or demotivating the employee.

However, overall, the body of research suggests that negative feedback tends not to have a positive effect on performance, partly because it is more difficult for employees to perceive it as fair.[10] On the other hand, feedback that focuses on positive aspects does tend to improve performance, even for low-performers.[11] It might sound counterintuitive, but feedback can usefully focus on the positives even when performance is evidently below standard.

One way of discussing performance with employees without giving negative feedback is to take a strengths-based approach. This is based on the premise from positive psychology that, although we tend by default to look for improvements by trying to fix problems (a deficit-oriented approach), very often there is more scope for improvement in trying to amplify and replicate existing strengths. An example is a technique called the feed-forward interview, which also involves a non-directional coaching style in which the manager elicits the employees' own views.[12] The conversation starts with discussion of a positive episode from the recent past, where the employee has felt good and has performed well. It then identifies what helps them perform (their personal 'success formula') and how to ensure the same conditions in the future. Research has found this technique to predict better performance ratings several months later,[13] and CIPD research found that with a similar strengths-based approach, one-to-one conversations became more useful for employees' performance and learning and development.[14]

Framing negative feedback
Nonetheless, there are clearly cases where negative feedback is unavoidable. Assuming that a performance issue is not so serious that formal capability procedures are required, the main aim should be to make feedback easy to take on board. It is vital to prepare and consider not just the main points of feedback, but also how it is framed.

Research finds that negative feedback that is first framed in a positive way is more likely to improve performance than if there is no specific framing or negative framing. Positive framing helps employees maintain their attention on pragmatic aspects – the task in hand and the specific detail of feedback – rather than being distracted by non-task-related 'meta' thoughts and worries, such as, *'Is this job beyond me?'* or *'What's going to happen as a consequence?'*. An example of positively framed, negative feedback is:

'Overall, you are performing well – your normal customer satisfaction ratings are above average and you meet all your other targets. However, some of your customer satisfaction scores last month were 2/5. That is something that needs to be improved, so I'd like to focus on that. When it was low, the customers mentioned that they couldn't understand your communication. You can try to use simpler words and talk slower.'

A similar approach can be applied in other occupations, even if performance scores are less clear-cut. The benefit of this approach is to give an employee the broader sense of confidence that helps them be solutions-focused and assimilate the negative feedback, without feeling defensive or panicked. This is not about sugar-coating or hiding negative feedback – there may be a risk in what's been called a 'praise sandwich' (positive feedback, followed by a small amount of negative, followed by positive) that the recipient misses what's intended to be the main (negative) message.

Different perspectives for different tasks

Although positive feedback is generally more helpful or effective than negative, there are certain situations in which this is not the case. In particular, negative feedback is more effective than positive feedback in increasing motivation and performance when tasks are focused on precision, risk and prevention – for example, when working with potentially dangerous machinery or information that could be litigious or damaging.[15] However, the opposite happens when people work on creative tasks: here, negative feedback is likely to harm performance.

This happens because the tasks in themselves require people to focus on different things. Prevention tasks require vigilance and attention to detail to prevent undesirable events. Creative tasks require envisaging, working towards and achieving something positive. The negative or positive feedback fits with the task-induced focus and thus enhances performance.

Recommendations for practice

Managers and any other colleagues giving feedback should be encouraged and trained to do the following:

- Deliver specific feedback. Provide them with a guide on what specific, detailed and elaborated feedback means, including what points they should cover.

- Before giving feedback, assess what type of tasks the feedback will cover. For most tasks, and especially creative ones, avoid giving negative feedback where possible and focus on positive episodes and on how to recreate them in the future. For precision, risk and prevention tasks, negative feedback is more appropriate.

- When negative feedback is necessary or likely to help, frame the message positively and constructively – mentioning other positive aspects of performance and positioning the negatives as an opportunity for improvement – before discussing the improvements needed.

- When giving negative feedback on performance, use causal language to explore the underlying reasons for them.

④ The process of giving feedback

It's important to consider the process of giving feedback as well as the content being delivered as feedback. How the information has been determined and how, when, and by whom it is communicated all make a difference to how effective the feedback will be.

Perceived fairness
As well as being an exchange of information, feedback is also a social process. The most important dynamic here is fairness. When the feedback process is perceived as fair, employees are more likely to have favourable reactions, and consequently to accept the feedback and improve their performance.[16]

A fair process means that the decisions made to determine the information given as feedback were consistent, accurate, unbiased, and open to voice and input.[17] In the case of feedback, this means that:

- the same standards are applied when determining the feedback for comparable roles or people

- information used to inform the feedback is correct and complete

- efforts are made to eliminate biases and increase objectivity

- the employee can give input into how the feedback is determined.

For example, automatic feedback might be perceived as less biased than subjective feedback, while 360-degree feedback that includes a self-evaluation might be seen as more open to input. In addition, as we also found in our evidence review on performance appraisal, employees are more likely to feel that feedback is fair if it is a two-way conversation in which they are actively involved so that they can respond to and feed into their manager's feedback.

Frequency and promptness of feedback
A popular idea in organisations is that feedback should be frequent and 'timely'. Many organisations encourage weekly one-to-one meetings with managers as an opportunity to give feedback and encourage feedback to be given as soon as possible. The evidence from scientific research does not necessarily support this practice.

Making feedback more *frequent* does not usually make it more effective. For example, one study found that professionals who received monthly feedback improved more than those who received weekly feedback.[18] The reason for this seems to be that when people receive feedback for a shorter period of time, they only act on the latest feedback they got, instead of making considerations based on several points of information over a longer period of time.

Whether performance feedback benefits from being *prompt* is a slightly different question. The research on this in workplace contexts is limited, but gives some support. For example, employees may find it more helpful and specific, be satisfied with the meeting and feel that there was a good atmosphere.[19]

But the wider body of research – which mainly comes from educational settings – gives a mixed picture on prompt or timely feedback. The studies are less directly applicable but still give relevant insights for workplaces. We find that in some contexts timely feedback enhances learning, but in others delayed feedback is better. In particular, it seems that

immediate feedback is preferable when developing technical or procedural skills (such as programming and mathematics) or when the task is especially difficult.[20] This is because it can increase the learner's understanding of the consequences of their actions as well as motivate them to practise. However, when developing capability in more generic, less precise tasks, delayed feedback is preferential. This is because it is more important to allow for self-reflection and trust people to figure things out for themselves.

Overall, the timeliness of feedback may make a difference but other factors are more important. The quality of feedback or how it is given – for example, whether it is specific, constructive and fair – is more important than giving a large quantity of frequent feedback.

A good way to approach the timing of feedback could be to explicitly discuss and agree it with the individuals. People have differing views of what are acceptable timeframes for procedures,[21] so managers may do well to openly ask their team members when they would find feedback most useful, both in general and in relation to specific pieces of work.

Feedback from a credible source

The source of feedback – that is, who or what gives it – influences its impact. The main factor is the perceived credibility of the source. This is particularly important when the source is another person (as opposed to an automated system) and thus potentially subjective, and when the feedback is negative.[22]

To give credible feedback, a person needs to have expertise about the job being performed, visibility of the actual performance and an accurate manner of measuring it. Credibility also relies on trustworthiness: for example, whether it's believed that the person giving feedback typically draws objectively on valid information, or tends to make gut decisions not informed by convincing evidence.

Personality and encouraging positive reactions

One influence on how a person receives feedback is their personality: some people are better at taking feedback on board than others. Research finds that personal characteristics or traits that influence this include one's self-esteem, competitiveness and locus of control (that is, the tendency to attribute events to internal or external causes).

These are stable tendencies, meaning that in the immediate term, there is little that a manager giving feedback can do to influence them. However, managers and people professionals can still help build positive traits in the day-to-day work environment and encourage employees to be open-minded and react positively to feedback.

Giving specific and pragmatic feedback (as already discussed above) also helps. Feedback focused on the task helps maintain the attention on task-related thoughts and prompt concrete next steps that are in the control of the recipient. This is more productive than employees focusing in more global terms about their capabilities or indeed personality, or worrying about the consequences of negative feedback for their careers.

Recommendations for practice

- Ensure feedback is fair and seen to be fair. Explain to employees how the information was gathered, highlighting why it is consistent, accurate and unbiased.

- Encourage managers to ask people what feedback they would find most helpful, both to involve them in the process and help make it specific in relevant ways.

- Don't push for very frequent or immediate feedback across the board. Encourage teams and managers to find the frequency and timing that works for them – monthly might be better than weekly, and immediate feedback might not always be the most helpful.

- Managers should involve employees in a two-way conversation, rather than making feedback one-way, top–down communication.

- Provide training on how to minimise biases and accurately use observations to inform feedback. This will help them build credibility, ultimately increasing the chance for feedback to improve performance.

⑤ HR practices to support effective feedback

Feedback is a person-to-person process most often led by managers, but people professionals can establish practices that help ensure it is given effectively. One obvious step is to provide training and development – especially as part of broader management and leadership development programmes – that builds the capabilities needed for good-quality feedback content and effective feedback delivery (see sections 3 and 4). They can also make sure that effective feedback is fostered throughout standard people management processes, as this section explores.

Goal-setting
Goals and objectives identify the gap between where one is and where one wants to be. Goals and feedback are tightly linked: feedback is often given or interpreted in regard to a goal, and goals in turn are set or adjusted following feedback.[23]

Setting goals has a positive effect on performance, but this effect is far stronger when employees are able and willing to track their progress towards their objectives, rather than only review their achievement at the end of a project or year.[24] Gathering feedback is an essential way to gain insights into progress made towards goals.

Feedback also tends to work best when the initial goals are specific and challenging – as discussed in our evidence review on goal-setting. A specific goal will make it easier to provide specific feedback, thus encouraging performance improvement. However, there are exceptions when this is not the case. First, when employees initially have to learn the skills to perform a task, generic goals ('do your best') lead to higher performance than specific goals. Second, when the task to be accomplished is complex, learning goals (focused on adopting certain procedures to perform the task correctly rather than on task outcomes or results) do the most to boost performance.

Recommendations for practice

- Before giving feedback to employees, make sure goal-setting takes place. Train employees and managers to set specific and challenging goals, unless skills need to be acquired or the task is complex for the employee – in this case, encourage learning-focused goals.

- Encourage employees to focus on and track the progress they are making in their work. This could be done through periodic reflection time for the employee to think about the progress they have made. Sharing work progress with colleagues may also encourage this mindset, for example, by posting on a company intranet or giving team updates.

Performance appraisals

As part of performance management practices, an employee's work is usually appraised by their manager (and sometimes by peers and other stakeholders) and then feedback is delivered by the manager on the results. Besides this formal process, which might take place once or twice a year, managers are encouraged to give feedback to their employees about how their performance is going throughout the year.

Performance appraisal clearly overlaps with feedback, and factors such as perceived fairness, accuracy and bias are important in both. Additionally, some factors are specifically important in the context of performance management practices, as discussed in our evidence review on performance appraisal.

One important insight from research into performance appraisal is that it can serve two purposes: administrative (for example, to inform pay rises) and developmental (helping employees improve). However, often the process is unclear or conflated – that is, the intention is to cover both at the same time. This is not realistic. Managers rate employees very differently in these two situations and using the same evaluations for both purposes is likely to be unfair and hard for employees to process.

Although the intent of feedback is usually developmental rather than administrative, it is important to note the context in which it is being given – in particular in relation to broader performance management practices. For example, if a meeting is centred on decisions on pay rises or promotions, employees are less likely to be open to feedback and take it on board to improve their performance.

Recommendations for practice

- If your organisation has a performance appraisal process in place, separate the conversations about appraisals and administrative decisions from those where feedback is shared with the goal to improve performance and help development.

- Ensure the performance appraisal process is fair: define clear, consistent criteria; train evaluators on how to avoid biases; open the process up to input from employees.

Multi-source or 360-degree feedback

Feedback can in principle be enriched and made more credible and convincing by using several sources to inform it – for example, peers, clients and direct reports as well as one's manager. This approach is called multi-source or 360-degree feedback. It can be delivered either through an automatically generated report or in a discussion with a coach.

Research on multi-source feedback finds that improvements in performance over time are small.[25] Furthermore, receiving feedback from more sources does not make a difference compared with receiving feedback from direct reports only.

Nonetheless, multi-source feedback has some promise. The factors that make it effective are similar to feedback in general: the recipient has to be open to it and react positively, they need to be motivated to make a change and to set goals about what they need to change, and it needs to be fair and convincing.

Recommendations for practice

- If using multi-source feedback, make sure that it incorporates all the other success factors for performance feedback more generally.

- Offer training on how to answer multi-source feedback questionnaires, in order to reduce bias and increase fairness.

6 Conclusion

Feedback is a buzzword in the world of work – managers are encouraged to give more feedback, more often. Budgets are spent on interventions to build a 'feedback culture'. The research evidence clearly shows that the picture is not as straightforward as it is often assumed. Perhaps the most striking insight from the body of research is the variability in the effects of feedback. Nonetheless, it is also clear that *when delivered well*, feedback can be a highly effective way to improve performance.

This review can be considered a reliable summary of the best available research evidence on performance feedback. The research is focused mainly on feedback given by managers, but most of the insights are relevant for anyone, including colleagues giving peer feedback.

Fortunately, there is a good body of research pointing to opportunities to make feedback more effective. Key lessons to draw in effective feedback include:

- Good-quality feedback means information that is specific, relevant to the job, constructive, credible and unbiased. It requires the right skillset (which can be developed through training) and time to prepare.

- The quality of feedback is much more important than the amount, frequency or 'timeliness' of feedback.

- In most situations, positive feedback is a more effective way to improve performance than negative feedback, so the common instinct to use feedback to correct problems or fix weaknesses should be kept in check. In general, negative feedback should be used sparingly.

- There are some contexts – such as detailed technical tasks – in which negative feedback is helpful and others in which it is unavoidable. Here it is important to frame the feedback in a positive context (without distorting or hiding the main message) to give the recipient the confidence they need to keep a pragmatic mindset and process the feedback effectively.

- Employees should be able to see that the information that informs feedback was gathered in a reasonable and reliable way, draws on credible sources and is unbiased. They should also be able to respond to feedback, so that it is a two-way consultative process.

- For feedback to improve performance, it is crucial that employees react to it positively. The main influence on this is whether feedback is perceived as fair and useful. Good-quality, positive feedback, delivered through fair processes, is the best route to ensuring this.

- An employee's personality will also influence how open they are to feedback. Managers and people professionals cannot control this but can encourage people to be open to feedback.

By understanding the underlying factors of influence in feedback and adopting certain practices in informing and communicating it, line managers and people professionals can make it more likely to achieve its core purpose: to improve performance.

(7) Notes

1   Hattie, J. (2008) *Visible learning: a synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. London: Routledge.

2   Kluger, A.N. and DeNisi, A. (1996) The effects of feedback interventions on performance: a historical review, a meta-analysis, and a preliminary feedback intervention theory. *Psychological Bulletin*. Vol 119, No 2. p254.

3   Kluger and DeNisi (1996) – see note 2.

4   Festinger, L. (1954) A theory of social comparison processes. *Human Relations*. Vol 7, No 2. pp117–40.

5   Kluger and DeNisi (1996) – see note 2.

6   Smither, L. and Reilly, R. (2005) Does performance improve following multisource feedback? A theoretical model, meta-analysis and review of empirical findings. *Personnel Psychology*. Vol 58, No 1. pp33–66.

7   Raemdonck, I. and Jan-Willem, S. (2013) Feedback perceptions and attribution by secretarial employees. *European Journal of Training and Development.* Vol 37, No 1. pp24–48; Casas-Arce, P., Lourenco, S.M. and Martinez-Jerez, F.A. (2017) The performance effect of feedback frequency and detail: evidence from a field experiment in customer satisfaction. *Journal of Accounting Research*. Vol 55, No 5. pp1051–88.

8   Schaerer, M., Kern, M., Berger, G., Medvec, V. and Swaab, R.I. (2018) The illusion of transparency in performance appraisals: when and why accuracy motivation explains unintentional feedback inflation. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*. Vol 144. pp171–86.

9   Murthy, U.S. and Schafer, B.A. (2011) The effects of relative performance information and framed information systems feedback on performance in a production task. *Journal of Information Systems.* Vol 25, No 1. pp159–84; Loftus, S. and Tanlu, L.J. (2018) Because of 'because': examining the use of causal language in relative performance feedback. *Accounting Review*. Vol 93, No 2. p277.

10 Lam, S., Yik, M. and Schaubroeck, J. (2002) Responses to formal performance appraisal feedback: the role of negative affectivity. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. Vol 87, No 1. pp192–201.

11 Murthy and Schafer (2011) – see note 9.

12 Kluger, A.N. and Nir, D. (2010) The feedforward interview. *Human Resource Management Review*. Vol 20. pp235–46. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2009.08.002

13 Budworth, M.H., Latham, G.P. and Manroop, L. (2015) Looking forward to performance improvement: a field test of the feedforward interview for performance management. *Human Resource Management*. Vol 54, No 1. pp45–54.

14 Gifford, J., Urwin, P. and Cerqua, A. (2017) *Strengths-based performance conversations: an organisational field trial*. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. Available at: http://www.cipd.co.uk/strengthsPM

15 Van Dijk, D. and Kluger, A.N. (2011) Task type as a moderator of positive/negative feedback effects on motivation and performance: a regulatory focus perspective. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*. Vol 32, No 8. p1084.

16 Jawahar, I.M. (2010) The mediating role of appraisal feedback reactions on the relationship between rater feedback-related behaviors and ratee performance. *Group and Organization Management*. Vol 35, No 4. pp494–526.

17 Colquitt, J.A., Scott, B.A., Rodell, J.B., Long, D.M., Zapata, C.P., Conlon, D.E. and Wesson, M.J. (2013) Justice at the millennium, a decade later: a meta-analytic test of social exchange and affect-based perspectives. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. Vol 98, No 2. p199.

18 Casas-Arce et al (2017) – see note 7.

19 Ilgen, D.R., Peterson, R.B., Martin, B.A. and Boeschen, D.A. (1981) Supervisor and subordinate reactions to performance appraisal sessions. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*. Vol 28, No 3. pp311–30. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/0030–5073(81)90002–7

20 Shute, V.J. (2008) Focus on formative feedback. *Review of Educational Research*. Vol 78, No 1. pp153–89. Available at: https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654307313795

21 Outlaw, R., Colquitt, J.A., Baer, M.D. and Sessions, H. (2019) How fair versus how long: an integrative theory-based examination of procedural justice and procedural timeliness. *Personnel Psychology*. Vol 72, No 3. pp361–91. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12309

22 Steelman, L.A. and Rutkowski, K.A. (2004) Moderators of employee reactions to negative feedback. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*. Vol 19, No 1. pp6–18.

23 See our evidence review on goal-setting: Gifford, J. (2016) *Could do better? Assessing what works in performance management*. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. Available at: www.cipd.co.uk/coulddobetter.

24 Harkin, B., Webb, T.L., Chang, B.P., Prestwich, A., Conner, M., Kellar, I., ... and Sheeran, P. (2015) Does monitoring goal progress promote goal attainment? A meta-analysis of the experimental evidence. *Psychological Bulletin*. Vol 142, No 2. pp198–229.

25 Smither and Reilly (2005) – see note 6.

CIPD