



***"If a man harbors any sort of fear, it makes him landlord to a ghost."***

**Lloyd Douglas**

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## **No, This Will Be Good For You**

Is receiving feedback rewarding? Perhaps, if it's positive. But, feedback providers tend to borrow from behaviorist psychology (Skinner, etc) in assuming that getting the feedback will result in learning, much in the same way that rewarding a behavior will.

In most cases, [performance](#) or [360 feedback](#) is not nearly immediate enough to be linked to specific behaviors. Also, the feedback from these processes tends to focus on what a person should be doing (which can be vague) as opposed to rewarding good behaviors (which leads to learning).

So, how can the feedback process lead to more learning? Here are two tips:

1. Focus more on rewarding good behaviors than pointing out poor ones. Not only will this help the person receiving feedback, but if others see which behaviors are rewarded they will want to emulate them.
2. If you point out a behavior that should be changed, point out what the better replacement behavior is **and** the reward the new behavior.

Remember, insight alone won't change behavior (otherwise, therapists would be out of business). If your feedback is solely focused on pointing out what's wrong with a person and you don't reward them for doing what is right, the people receiving the feedback will always treat it like a trip to the dentist rather than a learning experience.

If you're interested in improving how your company provides [performance feedback](#), please contact [Warren Bobrow](#).

## Brainstorming Tricks

In the spirit of Halloween, let's talk about some brainstorming tricks that can help you yield some treats in the form of ready-to-implement solutions to your organization's challenges. Although there are a variety of steps you can take to increase the effectiveness of your brainstorming session, try focusing on these three first:

**Establish ground rules.** These rules can include, but are not limited to: write down **all** ideas, do not judge or eliminate any ideas, ask questions only to understand (not to discredit).

**Set a time limit.** If you assign short time limits, you can often minimize the tendency for groups to fall into discussion and judgment. You'd be surprised at how much information can be generated in 7-10 minutes. This trick can also pump up the energy level of a meeting by switching topics quickly and often.

**Carefully craft your questions.** Depending on the complexity of the problem, consider breaking multi-faceted problems into manageable chunks. For example, instead of "How can we improve communications?" you could have several more focused questions that cover several aspects of communication such as "Who should receive our newsletter?", "What are the obstacles to upward (and/or downward) communication?" and "What improvements do we expect to see as a result of improved communication?"

If you're interested improving [meeting facilitation](#), employee participation, and problem solving in your organization, please contact [Kammy Haynes](#)