Two takes on creative teams

1.   Guidelines for Effective Feedback -- Julian Gorodsky

1. Feedback should either **be solicited** or **given with agreement**.
2. Feedback is **MY perception** and **MY truth**; it is not fact just because I believe it.
3. Feedback refers to **specific, observable behavior.**
4. Feedback should not relate to behavior or circumstances the **receiver cannot control**.
5. Feedback is most effective when it is **timely.**
6. Feedback relates to **positive or negative perceptions** of the receiver's behavior.
7. Feedback is **non-judgmental.**
8. Feedback is **not advice.**
9. Feedback is a gift - it becomes the **property of the receiver.**

The I-Statement

This simply suggests a means to preface your sharing of perceptions with the word "I." That means that you're sharing your stuff. Note the difference between the following two groups of statements. First, "You never listen to a word I say! You don't care if I'm even in this group!" Second, "I sometimes think you don't listen to me. It seems that you don't remember what I say. Is that true? I feel invisible to you, and I don't want to be." The first group places blame on the other person, while the second group, the "I" statements, express what the speaker is feeling.

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Three Finger Feedback

Imagine pointing to the person you are giving feedback to, extending your index finger toward them. Now look at your hand, observing the direction your lower three fingers are pointing, back at you. This is a way to realize that we might think three times before giving feedback to another because it's more likely that the feedback is about you. If the perception you want to share passes this test, it is probably authentic feedback that will be easier to receive.

2. Why creative teamwork sucks
(from Bob Sutton's course on creating infectious action)

Creative work is sometimes portrayed as fun and teamwork sounds so soft and sweet. Yet working in creative teams sucks for many numerous well-established reasons.

1. **Interdependence is high** - it means that things don't come out the way you want them to.. .compromise sucks. I like it **my** way.

2. **You never really know who is right.** Who has the greatest and the least expertise overall, let alone at any given time, is unclear. The more certain the work, the more rigid the status order is possible.

3. Research on group dynamics, leadership, and prestige suggests that – independent of skill - **talkative and somewhat nasty people rise to the top** unless there are powerful counterforces. The "blabber mouth theory of leadership" and "brilliant but cruel" phenomenon explain who rises to the top. But can undermine team performance.

4. **Disagreement sucks.** The best creative teams fight a lot, fighting can be no fun even when it is done right, it still makes people tense and hurts their feelings.

5. **Criticism sucks** - especially when it happens to me! It is part of the creative process.

6. **Creativity entails constant failure and setbacks**, even in the best teams and companies. Most new ideas are bad, old ideas are safer, but aren't creativity. People who do routine work are usually right; people who do creative work are usually wrong.

7. **Wasting time sucks.** Teams are naturally slower, when there is uncertainty about direction and about who knows the most and least, it gets even worse. The creative process is naturally messy and uncertain, but what is the alternative?

8. **You can do everything right and still be dead wrong.** No matter how much argument you do, how much data you gather, and how much testing you do, your creative ideal will likely be wrong. Most new companies, products, and technologies fail.

Despite all this, there are still creative teams that find ways to create great pleasure in the process. How? Focusing on the joys of the journey, framing things as positively as possible ("prototyping" is constant improvement not endless failure), curiosity, and mutual respect. And some people love the mess and interdependence -- but not linear, conflict adverse, uncompromising loners.

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