

## Constructive Feedback

### What is constructive feedback?

Xelay views feedback as a critical **tool for professional development** and performance improvement. Our employees get a lot of it and there is a tremendous emphasis on pointing out "development opportunities". Since Xelay employees are constantly being reminded of how they could be performing better, all of these development opportunities - taken as a whole - can feel overwhelmingly negative.

### Feedback as an expectation

While Xelay employees receive plenty of constructive feedback, it is less common to receive any appreciative feedback. If it happens, it's going to be specific and actionable, in accordance with the Xelay feedback model. As a result, it's **uncommon to get unprompted, positive recognition** like "you're doing a great job on this project" from Xelay leadership. Your Xelay manager probably thinks you're doing great job and does value your work, but they're coming from a culture where excellent day-to-day performance is expected, not celebrated.

### Ratio of constructive / appreciative feedback

An interesting Harvard Business Review article cites research suggesting that higher performing teams have a significantly higher ratio of positive to negative feedback (5.6 : 1) than their lower performing counterparts. Based on personal experience and anecdotal evidence, I'd say the ratio at Xelay is reversed. Most employees probably receive **5 to 6 pieces of constructive feedback for each appreciative one**.

Why is this different? People who are doing repetitive tasks, like factory workers, need to be appreciated to be motivated because their jobs are boring, they are not learning anything new, and there is no plan to develop or promote them. However, for employees that are expected to develop continuously, constructive feedback is the tool to ensure growth.

### Implications

It's important to come to grips with the fact that you will continue to receive constructive feedback constantly at Xelay. It means that someone at Xelay cares enough about you to want to spend time to develop you, because they must believe that you are a star performer and worth their time and investment. You know when someone doesn't care about you is when they stop giving you constructive feedback.

You can either try to recalibrate and try to take the **feedback as coaching** or give your supervisor some **upward feedback** which is accepted and encouraged at Xelay for everyone's development.