



Hi graduate friends,

We know that getting feedback is hard! You put so much energy into your work, and then you hear it's not perfect! You may feel disappointed, angry, fearful, insecure, and more. That's quite common though.



Getting feedback is a highly emotional event, and the reactions to it can sometimes even include physical symptoms (Falchikov & Boud, 2007). But in theory, you probably agree that feedback is good and necessary, no? It's actually said to play an essential role in shaping your scholarly and professional identities (Friedrich-Nel & Mac Kinnon, 2015). So, here are a few tips for receiving feedback.

First, take a deep breath and recognize that emotions can impact how you take in the feedback. E.g., some negative emotions can hinder your understanding and ability to use the feedback (Yu et al., 2019) or they may lower your self regulation and increase your irrelevant thinking (Pekrun et al., 2002). None of this will help.

Second, now that you know the potential dangers of heightened emotions, practice *slow feedback* (Ryerson Student Affairs, 2019). This means, choose to set the feedback aside for at least 24 hours (make it 2-3 days if you can). In the time, do something that will give you perspective, e.g., get together with friends or go hiking.

Third, reapproach the feedback when you're well rested, not hungry, and not in a hurry (if possible). Reread comments while consciously trying not to get defensive. Make note of your genuine questions to ask them from your supervisor/professor later on. If changes are needed to be made, start with the ones you agree on, and take time to separate yourself again if you start getting wound up.

Fourth, once you've honestly looked at the feedback and made your chosen revisions, recognize that it is a possibility to disagree with some items as well.



Research shows supervisors complain that they feel many students ignore their feedback (e.g., Carter & Kumar, 2017). If there is anything you disagree with, try not to simply ignore it. Afterall, your journey is meant to help you become an independent learner and/or researcher. So, respectfully address each item you disagree with, provide clear explanations and reasons, and let the discussion follow from there.

Best,

Western

Aldean Ellis (he/him), from your [Learning Development & Success](#) team!

GRADUpdATE is a monthly e-newsletter dedicated to helping students succeed in graduate school. This information is provided by Learning Development & Success, Room 4100, Western Student Services Building, Western University, Canada.

Reference:

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